

MEETING SUMMARY
FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (FMAC)
Michigan United Conservation Club
2101 Wood Street, Lansing, MI
Tuesday, June 12, 2007
1 p.m.

FMAC Members Present

Ms. Lynne Boyd, Chair, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Mr. William (Bill) Bobier, Earthscape Resource Management
Mr. Desmond Jones, Michigan Tree Farm System
Dr. Margaret (Peg) Gale, Michigan Technological University
Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging
Mr. William Cook, Michigan State University Extension
Ms. Erin McDonough, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, representing Executive Director
Mr. Gordon Wenk, MDA

FMAC Members Absent

Mr. Joel Blohm, Great Northern Lumber of Michigan
Mr. Thomas Dunn, American Motorcycle Association
Mr. Frank Ruswick, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Dr. Dan Keathley, Michigan State University
Ms. Susan Holben, MEDC
Mr. Bill Manson, Michigan Snowmobile Association
Ms. Anne Woiwode, Sierra Club

FMAC Committee Advisors Present

Ms. Leanne Marten, USDA Forest Service

Public Attendees/Guests

Mr. George Berghorn, Michigan Forest Products Council
Ms. Kelly Goward, Ottawa Conservation District
Mr. Rick Lucas, Mecosta Conservation District
Ms. Rachel Kuntzsch, Heart of the Lakes

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Present

Ms. Kerry Gray, DNR
Mr. Lawrence Pedersen, DNR
Ms. Kim Korbecki, DNR

Chair Lynne Boyd called the meeting of the Forest Management Advisory Committee to order at 1:14 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Boyd provided an overview of the agenda.

MOTION: **Mr. Warren Suchovsky** moved to adopt the agenda; supported by
 Mr. Desmond Jones.
 Motion passed.

ADOPTION OF MEETING SUMMARY/May 2, 2007

Chair Boyd called for adoption of the May 2, 2007 Meeting Summary.

MOTION: **Dr. Gale** moved to adopt the May 2, 2007 Meeting Summary, as amended; supported by **Mr. Suchovsky**.
Motion passed.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT FORESTERS PRESENTATION

Mr. Wenk provided handouts on the Forestry Assistance Program run through the Conservation Districts, and introduced **Rick Lucas**, forester with the Mecosta-Osceola Conservation District.

Mr. Lucas provided a brief history of foresters at Conservation Districts. In the early 1980s, the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts conducted a survey of private landowners and found (unsolicited) that over 60% of the respondents were in need for foresters and forestry assistance. There have been Conservation District Foresters ever since. Since 2003, the Forestry Assistance Program (FAP) has funded 18 full-time and 3 part-time Foresters that service 45 counties. The Foresters provide services to public and private non-industrial forest landowners.

Mr. Lucas services the Mecosta-Osceola and Lake Counties. He provides services to schools, townships, urban communities, and private landowners. The need for services has risen sharply over the past 20 years, and will continue to increase according to current trends. These services are important because as average acres owned becomes smaller, it becomes harder to keep people engaged in the forest resource. The emphasis now is to get more people who are currently not engaged in forest management (stewardship) to become more active.

Mr. Lucas explained that from 2004-06 the FAP has reached over 1 million people through walk-ins at the Conservation District offices, media promotions, workshops, site visits, and plan writing.

Mr. Lucas reported only about 5% of landowners currently have a management plan, and discussed how there is value in stimulating private landowners to have plans in place. **Dr. Gale** asked if private landowners could come to the Conservation Districts for plans, or do they recommend private companies? **Mr. Lucas** responded that Conservation District Foresters can write conservation and resource plans, but must be trained to write Tree Farm Plans and be certified to write Forest Stewardship Plans. He stated that some people feel only the private sector should write plans.

Mr. Lucas highlighted accomplishments within his program and reviewed the success of the Pine River High School project; he explained how others were brought in to finish the project and implementation on the ground is the true success of their program. **Mr. Lucas** reported the strongest part of a forestry assistance program is one-on-one site visits with the landowners. Dealing with their individual problems gives the foresters the opportunity to present other forestry uses and how they apply to their property.

Dr. Gale questioned if the Conservation Districts were currently turning away anyone requesting assistance; **Mr. Lucas** responded they are 2-3 months behind. **Ms. McDonough** asked if people are presenting with specific needs; **Mr. Lucas** answered most landowners are interested in wildlife management and he sees this trend continuing. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if landowners goals are wildlife management, how this relates to timber management; **Mr. Lucas** responded the landowner often sees how timber management will affect their wildlife management goals.

Mr. Wenk reported due to shrinking resource funding, this program will not be funded next year. He questioned the impacts this will have on the counties that are currently being serviced. The program is funded by the DNR through the Forest Development Fund and is administered by the Michigan Department of Agriculture. **Chair Boyd** confirmed the funding for the Forestry Assistance Program has been eliminated in the FY 2008 DNR budget

Chair Boyd stated the DNR has only 6 Service Foresters that work with private landowners, similar to the Forestry Assistance Program (FAP); they currently only review plans but are not writing plans.

Mr. Lucas introduced **Kelly Goward**, Conservation Forester for Ottawa and Allegan Counties. **Ms. Goward** reported Southwest Michigan Foresters get many calls and the landowners' needs are not being met. She reported farm woodlots are becoming interested in timber management to supplement income. Site-visits have been bringing up other issues such as forest health, invasive species, and water quality. Most woodlots have invasive species. Both counties have a lot of water sources. Urban concerns related to this are insect related disease, hazard trees, backyard habitat within urban landscapes, incorporation of native plants, and urban deer management. Both counties have lakeshore areas which present unique issues, such as critical dunes.

Ms. Goward highlighted accomplishments within her program, including a project in Ottawa County where the Tree Legacy Committee was developing a guidebook for tree planting on county roads. They have also been working with major utilities, Planning Commissions, and the Parks and Recreation Commission. The goal here is to maintain scenic corridors in Ottawa County. The Tree Legacy Committee hopes to finish the guidebook by fall for the fall planting.

Mr. Wenk thanked **Mr. Lucas** and **Ms. Goward** for their presentation.

Chair Boyd commented the DNR recently had to reduce the recreation fund and the Cooperative Forestry Program each by a total of \$75,000; this creates the potential of losing \$300,000 in Federal funds that the \$150,000 would have matched. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented that with the funding weakness in Michigan the importance of private lands is still not being recognized. He went on to say a different funding system needs to be developed. He suggested a dedicated funding source for the private sector needs to be explored. He commented landowners need to contact their legislators to prove to them forestry is a necessary resource.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMENTS ON APPLICATION OF MANAGEMENT AREAS IN THE ECOREGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

Chair Boyd stated **David Price**, DNR reported last month to the Committee on the application of management areas in the ecoregional planning process. He also presented this idea to the Statewide Council (SWC); in general the SWC felt this was a good way to go with the planning process. They support vegetative management regimes, and a single list of management areas be developed for the state, with the eco-teams having the ability to choose which were applicable to their area. The SWC charged the team of planners to develop the statewide list of management areas and their criteria, and present to the NRC in August or September. The list will be presented to FMAC again for further comment.

Mr. Suchovsky questioned how the plan will mesh with the management units the DNR already has, i.e. deer management, forest management. **Chair Boyd** responded the DNR is heading more towards a global management effort, with the focus being first on state forest land, then planning across all lands. She stated certification requires acknowledgement of all the DNR's planning processes, but there would still be a need for separate planning processes for specific programs. She stated the DNR is trying to look at opportunities to integrate planning, although some federal mandates affect how we can do things.

Mr. Suchovsky asked for the status of the Forest Management Plan; **Chair Boyd** answered the goal is to get the plan in front of the NRC by September; there has been a delay while the DNR was sorting through other plans, and the management area concept. **Larry Pedersen**, DNR stated the department must draw a line and compromise at some point; the plan will always be in the updating process. **Chair Boyd** reported there will be other opportunities for FMAC to look at the plan, and opportunities for public comment before it goes back to the NRC.

DNR RECOGNITION POLICY

Chair Boyd called for adoption of the DNR Recognition Policy. **There was not a quorum to vote on the DNR Recognition policy.**

DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIZING FMAC'S TOP ISSUES FACING MICHIGAN'S FOREST/REVENUE ADJUSTMENTS

Chair Boyd began by saying the Committee should focus on action steps to take to make progress toward accomplishing goals, and how the Committee is going to make an impact on timber supplies. The Committee had previously prioritized the top three short-term and long-term issues.

Short Term:

1. Timber Supplies
2. Retention of wood utilization industry
3. Sale of industrial forest lands

Long Term:

1. Fragmentation and Parcelization
2. Retention of wood utilization industry
3. Management and utilization of private forests

Mr. Berghorn commented that he is unsure of what the limitations are of the FMAC, but it seemed the fiber supply issues would be a good place to begin. He suggested the FMAC could also work with Forest Finance Authority (FFA) to try to get funding back, on current and future projects, investments from projects, and generally become advocates for what the FFA is trying to accomplish.

Mr. Suchovsky commented the FMAC needs to determine how much is available, how timber supply relates to bio-economy, especially low value woods, and many other issues.

Mr. Berghorn stated a committee like the FMAC could commission the type of survey needed to find information such as how much residue, biowood, market opportunities, and other information that is important to the state's economy.

Chair Boyd reported the FFA is being presented with a proposal to look at how to get the most out of the triple intensity FIA data that Michigan has had for 10 years. She commented the data is not currently in a format that allows users to get the most out of the data, or the industry to easily make sense of it.

Dr. Gale stated that there needs to be better communication between the DNR and Michigan Universities, and between Universities themselves. **Chair Boyd** agreed and said that **Donna LaCourt** could have an active role in getting this communication going between these groups.

Mr. Cook commented deciding what to inventory, at this point, is more important than the mechanics of doing it. **Dr. Gale** stated making partnerships are important; there is a Swedish company that is interested in beginning the research in Michigan. **Mr. Suchovsky** reported there is a demand for residue; Ontario is currently being solicited by European companies looking to buy pellets. **Mr. Berghorn** commented if FMAC chooses to go down the road of fiber supply residues, some interests will not necessarily be from people wanting to make biofuel; there are old standby mills that can use residue to make different composites.

Chair Boyd stated a list of steps needs to be created for the FMAC to begin to be productive. **Ms. McDonough** offered to put together a list of ideas.

The FMAC discussed and created the following list:

- Timber supply;
- Advocate for MFFA;
- Supply versus growth;
- Combining data layers- supply, residues, mills and capacity;
- Residue availability;
- Partnerships with universities;
- Residue transportation issues; and
- Forest strategy for the State of Michigan

Chair Boyd reported there was a Forestry Initiative in the early 1980s on how forestry could be a driver to the economy of Michigan. She questioned if this was something the Committee could mirror. **Dr. Gale** commented GIS is the way to go, so information can be at their fingertips.

Ms. McDonough suggested that FMAC develop a plan and then identify people to do the work. FMAC could advocate for the plan and assist people in accomplishing the work. She suggested beginning with a list of action items and then identify tasks that can be assigned to them. What does the Committee want to accomplish?

- Ensuring a long-term, stable, accessible timber supply;
- Availability and location; and
- Make accessibility known to potential users

Mr. Berghorn commented there is a need for something in the process that is driven by biological processes; what strategic action should the Committee take?

Chair Boyd stated when managing state forests there are more than just biological issues; there are many different opinions on what to do with forests and the Committee needs to get the data clearly out there. At this point there is not even an agreement on what the supply is. She continued to say the state needs one database with information so there is not several different databases. **Ms. McDonough** suggested defining all issues related to timber, putting together a plan, identifying other groups that could take on each issue, and then marketing the plan. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the Committee has a handle on the university standpoint, the questions and research they are looking at, their research of forest services; is there still gaps in their knowledge? **Dr. Gale** responded there are all kinds of reports on productivity, but is information out there we still do not know about. **Chair Boyd** stated she would assign staff to look at how the Committee can utilize the list they had come up with.

Committee brainstormed a list of action items to achieve the above goals:

- Identifying gaps in knowledge;
- Working with FFA;
- Michigan branding/marketing;
- Public perception/education;
- Identifying unique areas to preserve;
- Economic analysis of timber for various markets (cellulose), biofuels, including exports and imports);
- Knowing resources and developing GIS for the state;
- Threat analysis to sustainable forestry;
- Social/economic trends analysis; and
- Communicating issues with other organizations, agencies, etc.

Mr. Wenk asked, as an advisory group how the Committee is being received by the DNR?

Chair Boyd answered the Committee is being very well received; the Director genuinely wants advice.

DISCUSSIONS/COMMENTS ON DRAFT SOIL & WATER QUALITY (SWQ) MANUAL

Chair Boyd introduced **Larry Pedersen**, DNR and reported he was present to take comments and questions on the SWQ Manual. She reported **Mr. Pedersen** had met with the forest products industry last week; they had made some suggested changes. The DNR has also had an opportunity for public comments; the comment period ends on June 15. She concluded by saying there are forest certification issues related to the manual and the Department is welcoming all comments, so as to create a useable document.

Mr. Pedersen commented the Department has had a lot of good conversations with the industry. He stated there was internal (DNR/DEQ) research of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Department of Transportation standards, and the SWQ is a work in progress. The difficulty with revising this document is that it is meant for everyone from the general public to industry.

Mr. Suchovsky asked if there have been annual audits; he wondered if history has shown weaknesses in the previous manual and if that was the reason for the revision. **Mr. Berghorn** stated that **Chair Boyd** and **Mr. Pedersen** have been very receptive to all comments, and cross-input is needed. He commented that this manual needs to be more readable; it is not as easy to read compared with the 1994 manual. He stated everyone has FSC or SFI certification rules and the manual is not voluntary, but required. He said it is important to get the information to the loggers. **Mr. Pedersen** stated the Department recognizes the problem with the technical language of the SQW, and staff is editing the document right now. He also said size is an issue, as well as training; there will be a larger need for it. **Dr. Gale** recommended cutting costs by offering the manual on-line as a PDF file, instead of printing. **Mr. Berghorn** suggested getting with **Dennis Nezich**, DNR to ask him to work with the SFI people in Michigan to arrange training.

Chair Boyd asked the Committee to send any comments they have to the Department (Mr. Pedersen), and they will consider them. She reported the goal is to finish by this summer.

Mr. Pedersen commented the Department is taking its time to have discussions with others so as to put out the best product possible. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented it is important the revised document talk in terms of soil quality, rather than using the term "rutting".

ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR STATE FUNDING OF NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT – preliminary summary of findings

Rachel Kuntzsch, Heart of the Lakes Center reported her organization, and MSU's Land Policy Institute completed a portion of an economic impact policy survey on the drivers of conservation

spending in the U.S.; she provided a handout to the Committee and said she would be willing to present at a future meeting.

Ms. Kuntzsch reported the survey was based on four factors; natural resource base, socio-economic factors, political factors, and conservation spending. She commented that resource base has no affect on States' conservation spending and that social, economic, and political factors were the key drivers. Michigan's spending on natural resources was ranked 27th out of 48 and per capita ranked 47th out of 48.

A survey on public funding found 75% to 80% of the public is in favor of funding for natural resources. Her organization is trying to prove how important natural resources are for our economy. **Ms. Kuntzsch** reported she has been presenting to other groups and the legislature. She said the information she will present at a future meeting is available on their website at <http://www.heartoflakes.org>. Full results of the survey would be available by Mid-July.

Ms. Kuntzsch said she would be willing to return to present at the August FMAC meeting.

July Meeting- Field Tour

Chair Boyd stated she would like to conduct a field tour for the next Committee meeting in the Roscommon area. Ideas for field tour sites:

- Too wet location
- Clearcutting and buffers- visual management. Big issue in Roscommon area- group formed in that area that opposes clearcutting. Look at big picture- recent cut, 5 years after cut, 10 years after cut
- Kirtland Warbler management
- Regeneration/seeding issues
- ORV/Illegal trail usage
- Oak resource (forest health)

Mr. Berghorn suggested it might be helpful if the FMAC could receive aerial photos of the area.

Chair Boyd reported she would arrange a central meeting location, most likely the Roscommon Operations Service Center.

Chief Boyd called for adjournment.

MOTION: **Mr. Suchovsky** moved to adjourn; supported by **Dr. Gale**.
Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

Roscommon Operations Service Center
8717 North Roscommon Road
Roscommon, MI
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (field tour)